

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Blue Mountain Meats, Inc.

Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Documentation: the Key to Consistent, High-Service Levels

Client Profile:

Blue Mountain Meats, located in Monticello, Utah, is a small, broad-line food service distributor with an emphasis on producing meat products for the food industry. The company operates two separate divisions, the processing/production division and the warehouse operation. The processing/production division is under USDA regulation and produces fresh-cut mutton, beef, & pork products. Part of the production operation is a slaughter operation primarily for mutton which supplies carcass mutton for several tribal reservation areas in Arizona and New Mexico. The warehouse operation is where a variety of products in dry, frozen, and chill categories are purchased, slotted, sold, and shipped to customers. Blue Mountain Meats employs 50 people.

Situation:

Blue Mountain's high employee turnover made it difficult for the company to maintain high standards of customer service. As a result, inexperienced employees made mistakes and customers were unhappy, which in turn caused employee stress and ultimately led to more employee turnover and more unhappy customers. Blue Mountain Meats realized it would be advantageous to change their approach to training in order to bring employees up to speed quicker to avoid upset customers and maintain a higher level of service. The company contacted the Utah Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

MEP coordinated personalized training for individuals in the Blue Mountain organization to formalize a full documentation program. The process included ways to flow chart processes, documenting tasks down to the "key stroke" level, combining animation and video for training on procedures such as receiving incoming loads, inspecting trucks before routes, etc. The documentation project ultimately allowed managers to spend more time polishing and giving their employees incentives rather than having to spend all their time bringing them up from the ground level. The training was much more consistent with company policy, and Blue Mountain found that they didn't have to worry as much about an employee being trained wrong by other substandard employees.

Results:

- * Improved employee morale.
- * Improved customer service at all levels.
- * Saved 30 percent of time, as training process became more efficient.
- * Produced \$60,000 cost savings per year.

Testimonial:

www.mep.nist.gov



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"We are very pleased with the results of the direction we are taking with documentation up to this point and look forward to our goal of developing a complete training and testing program so that when our employees begin actually performing the duties of their jobs, they are already "experienced" enough to maintain our high level of customer service. We look forward to working on more projects with the MEP as we move forward as a company."

Tom Tibbs, Vice President